



Natural Resources Conservation Service  
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May 5, 2008

**WEST VIRGINIA BULLETIN NO:** WV330-8-2

**SUBJECT:** Process Improvement

**Purpose:** To solicit employee input on process improvement proposals

**Expiration Date:** September 30, 2008

**Action Requested by: May 12, 2008**

In November 2007, I informed you of changes within the management team designed to maximize individual strengths and improve NRCS efficiency in West Virginia. We have reached the 4-month mark of these changes, and I'm pleased with the progress being made.

I also said in the November message that my goal was to listen and learn from you. The draft staffing plan, sent to you in January 2008 and asking for your input, was the first step toward achieving this goal. Many of you have also offered opinions and suggestions on a wide array of subjects during my travels throughout the state. A common theme that emerged from these conversations was you care deeply about our success and want a voice in improving our future.

During the March 2008 management team meeting, I challenged my staff with developing a delivery system to transform your individual suggestions into tangible benefits. I am pleased to announce the framework is in place to begin, and you play a central role.

**If you have ideas, suggestions, or opinions on how we can operate the state more efficiently, provide better service to our customers, and put more conservation on the ground, please forward them through your supervisory chain to a member of the management team. You should include a brief statement explaining the current problem and how addressing it will result in improved work conditions or products. A template is attached for your use.**

The management team will evaluate and prioritize the submittals, and appoint an employee to lead a small study team. I will designate a management team member to serve as a champion for the team to provide oversight and guidance.

Each team will be composed of two to five employees, depending on the complexity and scope of the potential process improvement. Membership may include employees from different areas, positions, and grades.



Teams will be responsible for determining the feasibility of implementing the process improvement, making recommendations, and outlining subsequent actions. Members will provide progress updates during the bimonthly management team meetings. It is not my intent to deflect you from accomplishing your primary work duties. I anticipate the majority of the studies will require a limited amount of time to complete, and most teams will only need to meet a few times.

Participation is strictly voluntary – no one will be required to serve on a team. However, this is an opportunity for you to engage in directing our future and have ownership in meaningful change that will aid us in working more effectively and within the confines of our limited staffing.

**The first cutoff for submittals is May 12, 2008. Information received after this date will be deferred to the July 2008 management team meeting. Additional open periods will occur approximately 2-weeks prior to future management team meetings.**

Your efforts in putting conservation on the ground are very much appreciated, and I hope you will consider contributing to the process improvement initiative. Please contact Louis Aspey, ASTC-Operations, at (304) 284-7544 or [louis.aspey@wv.usda.gov](mailto:louis.aspey@wv.usda.gov) if you have questions concerning this bulletin.

/s/

KEVIN WICKEY  
State Conservationist

Attachment

DIST: E

## **Process Improvement Proposal**

**Subject area (i.e. administration, programs, operations, etc.):**

**Location (i.e. statewide):**

**What is the identified problem?**

**How will addressing the problem increase WV-NRCS efficiency?**

**Are you willing to serve on a team to study the problem and implement a solution?**

**Submitted by:**

**Date:**